

# ICPS newsletter

## ICPS establishes closer cooperation with government on European integration

*The process of Ukraine's European integration is unfolding more slowly than it should. Nowadays, the capacity of civil servants for effective change management, as well as monitoring, coordination, and implementation of Ukraine's EU-integration aspirations, has become of paramount importance in this process. This means not only effective interaction with the European Commission at the political and bureaucratic levels, but also training, assimilation of experience, and studying the analytical and methodological papers produced by the new EU member states while they were preparing for accession*

We believe that Ukraine's rapid advancement towards the EU is stymied by the following factors:

- low level of public awareness about government actions with regard to the European integration process;
- low level of public participation in the European integration process;
- lack of knowledge and skills in civil servants regarding effective implementation of Ukraine's European integration objectives (as well as the lack of a strategy for training civil servants in this area);
- lack of analytical and methodological materials regarding priority issues of Ukraine-EU integration.

In order to strengthen the government's capacity as concerns European integration, ICPS is implementing a comprehensive program for government cooperation whose key tasks include the following:

- strengthening the capacity of government bodies to implement European integration tasks by introducing European standards;
- raising public awareness on issues concerning European integration processes in Ukraine.

### **New forms of cooperation between think tanks and central government bodies established**

Recently, a project entailing ICPS's cooperation with the Ministry of Economy and European Integration of Ukraine was launched, titled "ICPS Expert Secondment

to the Department for European Integration"; it is aimed at developing the capacity of departmental workers to fulfill European integration objectives. The secondment of think tank experts to government institutions is broadly practiced in the West and is viewed as being most effective, since:

- Local experts are engaged who are knowledgeable on the corresponding topic and can apply the successful experience of other countries;
- Experts possess the know-how and skills, gained when working in the think tank, that allow them to employ modern-day methodologies;
- Experts are obliged to generate precise outputs—prepare analytical papers, conduct training, and share methodologies (unlike foreign experts from international technical assistance programs, who mostly work in the form of advice and consultations).

The project envisages the following:

- establishing a mechanism for public participation in the European integration process, by means of the department's cooperation with leading think tanks;
- development of a pilot project titled "EU Training for Workers of the Department for European Integration", and raising funds for its implementation;
- preparation of information and analytical papers on priority issues related to European integration;
- holding communication events.

### **Bulgaria willing to share its EU integration experience**

During 4–6 July 2003, under the framework of the joint project "Eastward European Union Enlargement—A Group of New Friends" ICPS welcomed the European Institute experts (Sofia). The project is being implemented jointly with experts from Bulgaria and Ukraine, with sponsorship from Freedom House aims at the following:

- to assess the functioning of institutional mechanisms and the capacity of government and non-government institutions for fulfilling Ukraine's objectives in the European integration process;
- to analyse the level of cooperation between government and non-government institutions when fulfilling European integration objectives;
- to assess international technical assistance programs provided for the execution of Ukraine's European integration objectives;
- to determine possible ways of involving government and non-government Bulgarian experts to share the country's EU-integration experience.

During the visit, experts from the European Institute and ICPS met with representatives of government institutions in charge of coordination of the European integration process, technical assistance, regional policy, strategic planning, as well as with business representatives, non-government institutions, and think tanks.

The project output will be a research report, with detailed recommendations for possible technical assistance programs, for cooperation with Ukrainian and Bulgarian government institutions, facilitated by the two centres.

## **A well-formed Ukraine-EU Action Plan will bring relations with the European Union to a new level**

During the past month, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, jointly with the Ministry of Economy and European Integration of Ukraine, have been devising proposals for the Ukraine-EU Action Plan, with the involvement of ICPS experts. The Action Plan is to be presented at the Ukraine-EU summit in October 2003.

In our opinion, the Action Plan should be based on the following two elements:

1. Introduction of a new format for documents defining legislative changes, development of necessary institutions and infrastructure, personnel training, necessary financing (from both the State Budget and EU technical assistance). Such a form is successfully practiced in candidate countries, to plan for EU accession objectives;

2. Anticipated mechanisms for monitoring and assessment of the Action Plan execution.

### **EU technical assistance should be channeled to back up the fulfillment of objectives of the Ukrainian government under the framework of a new Action Plan**

Technical assistance is one of the key issues currently on the European integration agenda of both Ukraine and the EU. Presently, the Ministry of Economy and European Integration of Ukraine, jointly with other central executive government bodies, is working on proposals for improving approaches to international technical assistance provided by the European Union, and boosting the effectiveness of its usage, to be submitted to the European Commission.

The results of a comparative analysis of technical assistance programs in Ukraine and Poland carried out by ICPS signal that Ukraine has three major problems associated with technical assistance:

- absence of a strategic framework for technical assistance, in the form of a political agreement between Ukraine and the EU (and other donors);
- technical assistance projects and their outputs often produced by foreign

executors, with only partial involvement of the Ukrainian party, not vice-versa;

- outputs of technical assistance projects not incorporated in the country's strategic objectives.

Certain methods successfully employed by the European Union in candidate countries could be used in Ukraine to ensure the effectiveness of transformation processes:

- combining the budget process with strategic planning at all levels (central, regional, and local) and the implementation of a public consultation mechanism into decision making;
- acceptance of the notion of the "institution" (in accordance with the Phare concept) as an aggregate of structures, procedures, standards, and skills, with the corresponding channeling of efforts for the institutional development of these key areas;
- implementation of the change management system, which comprises planning, coordination, monitoring, assessment, reporting, and negotiation;
- training civil servants at all levels for executing European integration objectives.

Given the above, when developing a changed approach to EU technical assistance, the Ukrainian party will be offering the following:

- TA will be channeled at fulfilling the objectives of the Ukraine-EU Action Plan and other European integration-related objectives that the country has to tackle;
- Technical assistance projects should help to develop institutions and infrastructure that are essential for business to grow and for attracting investments.

### **Success of European integration in the hands of qualified personnel**

The transformation process and a focus on integration with the European Union have thrown up new challenges for countries of the former Soviet bloc; in order to be accomplished, they require corresponding expertise and skills for civil servants at all levels. In the late 1990s, the government of Ukraine faced new challenges ensuing from the

Partnership and Co-operation Agreement (PCA) between Ukraine and the European Community.

The European side periodically accuses the Ukrainian government of failure to fulfil the objectives of the PCA, emphasising the incapacity of government institutions to make policy, consistently implement it, or "properly report on the accomplishment of particular objectives".

Nevertheless, we believe that the key reason of the failures is that when fulfilling these objectives, development of institutional capacity and training of corresponding experts were not the goals. Also, no EU training program for civil servants was arranged in Ukraine, neither for the State Budget money nor using that of international technical assistance.

Unlike Ukraine, the level of expert training in EU candidate countries is high, thanks to the implementation of the State Programs of EU Training for Civil Servants. Having gone through training, civil servants develop the capacity for not only policymaking in line with EU standards, but also for implementing it effectively, as well.

Keeping in mind the importance of skilled workers for the process of fulfilling European integration objectives, the State Council for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration adopted a decision stating the urgency of working out a State Program for Training, Re-training, and Upgrading for Experts (including, civil servants) in terms of EU and Euro-Atlantic integration of Ukraine. The program design process involves ICPS experts, who familiarised participants of the working group with the experience of candidate countries with the experience of candidate countries in developing programs of EU training for civil servants<sup>1</sup>, participated in the discussion of the draft program and furnished their comments on this issue. ■

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<sup>1</sup> For the results of the research into the experience of EU candidate countries in devising programs of EU training for civil servants, please see <http://www.icps.kiev.ua>.